Habitats Susceptible to Invasion

Although *A. altissima* is most common in urban areas, it poses an environmental threat because of its invasiveness in cultivated fields and natural areas. Seedlings can establish a deep taproot within 3 months from germination allowing the plant to grow quickly and out-compete native species for sunlight and space. It thrives in full sun but also exhibits shade tolerance. In addition, this plant produces an allelopathic chemical that prevents other plants from growing in its vicinity. Roadsides throughout the piedmont and mountains are infested with *A. altissima* providing the ideal habitat and conduit for spread of this plant.

Prevention and Control

Large female fruit bearing trees should be targeted for control to help reduce the spread of this plant by seeds. Hand-pulling young seedlings (no more than 0.5 inch in diameter) is possible when the soil is moist. Care must be taken to remove the entire plant since root fragments can re-grow.

Ailanthus altissima photography by James H. Miller, USDA Forest Service, Bugwood.org *(left) and Leslie J. Mehrhoff, University of Connecticut,* Bugwood.org (*right).*